

**REMARKS**

Claims 1-28 are pending in the application. Claims 1-28 have been rejected. Claims 1, 12, 13, and 21 have been amended. No new matter has been added.

**Claim Amendments**

Claims 1, 12, 13, and 21 have been amended to clarify that the resource is exchanged in response to the consultant responding to the inquiry.

**Rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102**

Claims 1-28 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102 (e) as being anticipated by Spencer (U.S. Patent No. 6,356,909). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

**Summary of Spencer**

Spencer discusses a web-based system for managing request for proposals (RFPs) and the corresponding responses to the RFP. Spencer discusses the use of a web-site interface which allows a user to request specific information for goods and service from specified vendors. Spencer also discusses a mechanism for automating the process of responding to the RFPs as well as a mechanism for automating the subsequent review, analysis and presentation of the responses. The system in Spencer attempts to provide an efficient system that enables a user to evaluate RFPs and their responses while also shortening the time required by vendors to generate the requested proposals.

**Argument**

Applicants respectfully submit that Spencer fails to disclose each and every element of claims 1-28. Specifically, Spencer fails to disclose “exchanging the resource between the

consultant and the inquirer in response to the consultant responding to the inquiry” as set forth in amended independent claims 1, 12, 13, and 21.

Applicants have amended claims 1, 12, 13, and 21 to further clarify that the exchange or resource is in response to the consultant responding to the inquiry. That is, the present invention encourages a consultant, who, as discussed in the background, may be too busy to respond or is overwhelmed by a great number of inquiries, to respond to a specific inquiry by providing a resource (for example a payment) to the consultant for responding to the specific inquiry.

As previously pointed out, Spenser is directed to managing requests for proposals (RFPs). This is not the same as what is disclosed in the by the present invention. Indeed, the RFP process is fundamentally different from what is claimed. With RFPs a request for a proposal is submitted and proposals are submitted in response in hopes of having the proposal accepted. It is only after that a proposal is accepted that a transaction takes place that may result in the exchanges of resources. In contrast, the present invention provides a resource in exchange for a response to an inquiry not the transaction that results from the response. Said another way, the RFP method discussed in Spenser has responses being submitted in hopes of receiving a reward while the present invention has provides a reward in hopes of receiving a response.

Accordingly, as Spencer fails to disclose each and every element of amended claims 1, 12, 13, and 21 as required under 35 U.S.C. § 102, Spencer does not anticipate amended claims 1, 12, 13, and 21. Since claims 2-11, 14-20, and 22-28 depend from amended claims 1, 12, 13, and 21, they incorporate each and every element of amended claims 1, 12, 13, and 21. As such, Spencer also fails to disclose each and every element of claims 2-11, 14-20, and 22-28.

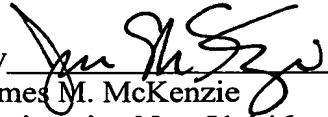
Thus, as Spencer fails to anticipate claims 1-28, Applicant respectfully request that the rejection to claims 1-28 be withdrawn and claims 1-28 be passed to issue.

**CONCLUSION**

In view of the above amendment, applicant believes the pending application is in condition for allowance.

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Respectfully submitted,

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